Hymn to the Goddess of Silence

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Hymn to the Goddess *of Silence*

ALL Hail! O awful, sage *Divinity!*
Goddess of *Silence!* hail! eternal *Pow'r*,
Who knowest how the *Universe* was form'd,
How *Nature* first began! for thou wast then,
And startedst at the dread, creating *Voice*,
E'en then thou wast, and still thou wilt endure,
When weary'd *Time*, and *Nature* are no more;
At *Desolation* thou again must start,
And the vast *Globe* shall fright thee with its Fall.

Thee, solemn *Being!* venerable *Queen!*
Whose Charms the busy *Vulgar* never know,
Thee the wife *Ancients* justly did revere,
And *Temples* to thy Name devoutly raise.

Thee, *Goddess!* thee, at the still Noon of Night
When all is hush'd, delighted, I adore,
And the pale Moon is witness to thy Rites.

Thee, pleasing *Deity!* the *sacred Nine*,
Daughters of *Jove*, the blest *Pierian* Maids
Pursue, and find thee oft in inmost Groves;
On Rocks remote, on shady Banks they meet
Thy kindly Aid, while *Phœbus* ever young,
Immortal *Phœbus* wakes his golden Lyre;
Thy tender Ear can brook the heav'nly Sound:
Thou'rt Friend to *Music*, and harmonious *Verse*;
For tho' thou shun'st the noisy, loud *Resorts*
Of restless Man, resounding *Palaces*,
The clam'rous *Camp*, the dire, tumultuous *Field*,
And oft at the throng'd *Bar* art call'd in vain;
How awful yet o'er crouded *Theatres*
Dost thou preside, when *Johnson's* manly *Scene*,
Shakespear, or moving *Otway* warms the *Stage?*

O thou, propitious to the tuneful *Quire!*
Where'er thou dost reside, receive my Vows!
Whether in Deserts wild, or Woods remote,
Where yet no Path is made, nor Echoes rude
Frighten the *Dryads* from their lov'd Retreat;

Or whether, lonely, thou delight'st to stray
At *Noontide* on the solitary Plain,
While Flocks, and Herds, and all the rural Rout
Of *Nymphs*, and *Swains* are hid in cooling Shades;
Or is the *Gothic* Temple's gloomy Isle,
The dusky Cloister, or dark Cyprus Grove
Thy lov'd Abode? Or dost thou choose to haunt
(Hard by old *Memphis*, and the fabled *Nile*)
The empty Vaults of lofty *Pyramids*,
Vain Monuments of ancient *Ægypt*'s Pride?
Or, haply, farther from the World remov'd,
On *Pindus'* Top, or *Atlas'* hoary Crown,
Or some vast Promontory thou dost stand,
Whence scarce the angry *Ocean* is o'erheard,
To lash the hollow, far-resounding Shoar.

Where'er thou'rt found, great *Pow'r*, vouchsafe thy Aid!
Deign visit our Retreat! the sacred *Muse*,
The sacred *Muse* with me your Help implores;
Of *War*, and *Sports* by turns we mean to sing,
Of mighty *Heroes*, and of mighty *Love*.
In vain the *God* of *Numbers* doth inspire,
In vain *Apollo*'s Sons attempt to soar
Without thy Influence. Come, Goddess, come!
Bring with thee *Quiet*, *Contemplation*,
Poetic *Visions* bright, and *Dreams* sublime,
Such as of old great *Homer* did inspire,
Such as the Gods above themselves may dream,
Still Dreams indeed; but Dreams of mighty *Jove*.

Thus well attended, bless our *Solitude!*
There nothing shall suspend thy gentle Reign,
Save the low Murmur of a distant Stream,
Except by chance sweet *Philomel* complains,
Or *Cloë* tunes her melting Voice, and Lyre.